Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1   1.   (Currently amended) A method comprising:

2   serially receiving, from a source, a plurality of forward messages each addressed

3   to one of a plurality of destinations, wherein each forward message is received at a destination

4   directly from the source;

5   receiving a plurality of availability signals, each availability signal indicating that

6   one of the destinations is available to accept a forward message;

7   simultaneously sending a forward message to each available destination;

8   simultaneously receiving, after a predetermined period of time, a plurality of

9   reverse messages from the destinations, each reverse message corresponding to one of the

10   forward messages simultaneously sent to an available destination; and

11   serially sending the reverse messages to the source.

1   2.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the source identifies each of

2   the forward messages by a different tag, further comprising:

3   placing a tag in a delay buffer when sending to a destination the forward message

4   identified by that tag, wherein the delay buffer implements a delay equal to the predetermined

5   period of time such that the tag is available when receiving from memory the reverse message

6   corresponding to the forward message; and

7   sending the tag to the source with the reverse message, whereby the source

8   associates the reverse message with the forward message.

1   3.   (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2   associating a priority with each forward message; and

3   sending a forward message to a destination when that forward message has a

4   higher priority than other forward messages addressed to that destination.

1   4.   (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the priority of each forward

2   message represents an age of that forward message.

1   5.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2   associated a priority with each reverse message; and

3   sending a reverse message to the source when that reverse message has a higher

4   priority than other reverse messages.

1   6.   (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the priority of each reverse

2   message represents an age of that reverse message.

1   7.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each destination is a memory

2   bank, each forward message is a memory transaction, and each reverse message is the result of

3   one of the memory transaction.

1   8.   (Currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

2   means for serially receiving, from a source, a plurality of forward messages each

3   addressed to one of a plurality of destinations, wherein each forward message is received at a

4   destination directly from the source;

5   means for receiving a plurality of availability signals, each availability signal

6   indicating that one of the destinations is available to accept a forward message;

7   means for simultaneously sending a forward message to each available

8   destination;

9   means for simultaneously receiving, after a predetermined period of time, a

10   plurality of reverse messages from the destinations, each reverse message corresponding to one

11   of the forward messages simultaneously sent to an available destination; and

12   means for serially sending the reverse messages to the source.

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1   9.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the source identifies each of

2   the forward messages by a different tag, further comprising:

3   means for placing a tag in a delay buffer when sending to a destination the

4   forward message identified by that tag, where the delay buffer implements a delay equal to the

5   predetermined period of time such that the tag is available when receiving from memory the

6   reverse message corresponding to the forward message; and

7   means for sending the tag to the source with the reverse message, whereby the

8   source associates the reverse message with the forward message.

1   10.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, further comprising:

2   means for associating a priority with each forward message; and

3   means for sending a forward message to a destination when that forward message

4   has a higher priority than other forward messages addressed to that destination.

1   11.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the priority of each forward

2   message represents an age of that forward message.

1   12.   (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 8, further comprising:

2   means for associated a priority with each reverse message; and

3   means for sending a reverse message to the source when that reverse message has

4   a higher priority than other reverse messages.

1   13.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the priority of each reverse

2   message represents an age of that reverse message.

1   14.   (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein each destination is a

2   memory bank, each forward message is a memory transaction, and each reverse message is the

3   result of one of the memory transactions.

1   15.   (Currently amended) A computer program product, tangibly stored on a

2   computer-readable medium, comprising instructions operable to cause a programmable processor

3   to:

4   serially receive, from a source, a plurality of forward messages each addressed to

5   one of a plurality of destinations, wherein each forward message is received at a destination

6   directly from the source;

7   receive a plurality of availability signals, each availability signal indicating that

8   one of the destinations is available to accept a forward message;

9   simultaneously send a forward message to each available destination;

10   simultaneously receive, after a predetermined period of time, a plurality of reverse

11 messages from the destinations, each reverse message corresponding to one of the forward

12 messages simultaneously sent to an available destination; and

13   serially send the reverse messages to the source.

1   16.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the source

2   identifies each of the forward messages by a different tag, further comprising instructions

3   operable to cause a programmable processor to:

4   place a tag in a delay buffer when sending to a destination the forward message

5   identified by that tag, wherein the delay buffer implements a delay equal to the predetermined

6   period of time such that the tag is available when receiving from memory the reverse message

7   corresponding to the forward message; and

8   send the tag to the source with the reverse message, whereby the source associates

9   the reverse message with the forward message.

1   17.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 15, further comprising

2   instructions operable to cause a programmable processor to:

3   associate a priority with each forward message; and

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4   send a forward message to a destination when that forward message has a higher

5   priority than other forward messages addressed to that destination.

1   18.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 17, wherein the

2   priority of each forward message represents an age of that forward message.

1   19.   (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 15,

2   further comprising instructions operable to cause a programmable processor to:

3   associate a priority with each reverse message; and

4   send a reverse message to the source when that reverse message has a higher

5   priority than other reverse messages.

1   20.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 19, wherein the

2   priority of each reverse message represents an age of that reverse message.

1   21.   (Original) The computer program product of claim 15, wherein each

2   destination is a memory bank, each forward message is a memory transaction, and each reverse

3   message is the result of one of the memory transactions.